

ecoNews — Wire —

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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For immediate release

- 1. Safe handling required for any amount of mercury**
- 2. DNR enforcement actions**

SAFE HANDLING REQUIRED FOR ANY AMOUNT OF MERCURY

CLINTON — A leaking package mailed from California to Iowa sent the Clinton fire department, the Davenport hazardous materials team and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to the Clinton post office Monday evening and has caused the recipient's home to be sealed.

The leaking substance was mercury — which is toxic even in small amounts. About four ounces of mercury in two glass containers was shipped to John Werner, a retired teacher, by another teacher. It's unknown if both glass vials were leaking.

Werner's house has been sealed until cleanup can be completed, illustrating the importance of proper disposal and cleanup of even small amounts of mercury.

Exposure to the vapors of liquid mercury — the type found in thermometers, fluorescent light bulbs and some medical equipment — can lead to serious health risks. Mercury can also be found in barometers, scientific equipment, switches and advertising signs.

Short-term exposure can result in nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, increased blood pressure or heart rate, skin or eye irritation, and lung damage. Long-term exposure can affect the brain, causing tremors, memory problems and changes in vision or hearing.

Products containing mercury should be taken to a regional household hazardous material center for proper disposal.

“Even one thermometer can exceed the safe limits for mercury,” said Adam Broughton, a DNR environmental specialist. “Mercury passes through wastewater plants untreated and re-enters streams, so it's important to keep it out of landfills and drains.”

If liquid mercury is spilled, evacuate and secure the spill area. Make sure that shoes and clothing have not been exposed to the mercury and close all doors and windows leading to other rooms. Ventilate the affected room by opening windows and doors that open only to the outside. Call the local health department or the Statewide Poison Control Center at 1-800-352-2222 for instructions on safe cleanup. Do not attempt to clean up liquid mercury without first contacting the local health department or poison control center.

“It’s important to immediately clean up a spill in your home, but contact local officials first,” Broughton said. “When mercury is spilled inside the home, it can shatter and create hundreds of beads within the household, giving off vapors.”

For more information, contact Adam Broughton at (515) 725-0386.

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DNR ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS

DES MOINES — The DNR has taken the following enforcement actions. Responsible parties have 30 days to appeal the charges or 60 days to pay the penalty.

- R. Victor Hanks and Mobile World, L.C., of Moline, Ill., were ordered to retain a licensed professional engineer to evaluate its wastewater treatment system, to submit a plan of necessary facility improvements and to hire a certified wastewater operator. They were also ordered to comply with all monitoring and reporting requirements, and to pay a \$10,000 penalty. The order is in regards to a manufactured home development known as Buffalo Bill Estates, located in Camanche.
- Twin Eagles Development, L.L.C.; Walter’s Investments International, Inc., d.b.a. Walters Homes Ltd.; and David Walters, of Des Moines, were ordered to comply with all storm water permits and to pay a \$8,000 penalty. The order is in regards to a construction site in Urbandale.
- DeBruce Grain, Inc., of Kansas City, Mo., was ordered to cease prohibited discharges, to pay \$9,712.64 in damages to the Fish and Wildlife Trust Fund, and to pay a \$6,000 penalty. The order is in regards to a chemical spill in Fremont County, which resulted in a fish kill in Mill Creek.
- Ed Cook, of Cherokee, was ordered to cease the open burning of tires, vehicles and other combustibles, and to pay a \$3,000 penalty. The order is in regards to burning tires, vehicles, mobile homes and other combustibles, producing black smoke and other air pollutants.
- Dean McCoy, of Lanesboro, was ordered to cease the illegal disposal of solid waste, to stop open burning, to properly dispose of all solid waste from his property, to verify proper disposal to the DNR and to pay a \$2,000 penalty.

- Miles McDougall, of LeMars, was ordered to pay a \$1,500 penalty. The order is in regards to failure to timely submit a manure management plan. The order has been appealed.
- Ellsworth Brothers Manure Pumping, LLC, of Algona, was ordered to comply with manure applicator requirements and to pay a \$500 penalty. The order is in regards to applying manure from a confinement feeding operation that did not have a required manure management plan.
- Robin Hewer, of Lost Nation, was ordered to submit a complete manure management plan (MMP) and fee, and to pay a \$3,000 penalty. The order is in regards to failure to submit an MMP for a facility located in Clinton County.
- Alan Friedman, of Templeton, was ordered to submit a complete manure management plan (MMP) and fee, and to pay a \$3,000 penalty. The order is in regards to failure to submit an MMP.
- Ellsworth Turkey L.C., d.b.a. South-side Turkey Farm, of Hamilton County, was ordered to submit a complete manure management plan (MMP) and fee, and to pay a \$3,000 penalty. The order is in regards to failure to submit an MMP.
- Ellsworth Turkey L.C., d.b.a. Sunrise Turkey Farm, of Hamilton County, was ordered to submit a complete manure management plan (MMP) and fee, and to pay a \$3,000 penalty. The order is in regards to failure to submit an MMP.
- Ellsworth Turkey L.C., d.b.a. Blue Sky Turkey Farm, of Hardin County, was ordered to submit a complete manure management plan (MMP) and fee, and to pay a \$3,000 penalty. The order is in regards to failure to submit an MMP.
- Eischeid Farms Inc., of Carroll County, was ordered to submit a complete manure management plan (MMP) and fee, and to pay a \$3,000 penalty. The order is in regards to failure to submit an MMP.

Consent Orders

A consent order is issued in settlement of an administrative order or as an alternative to issuing an administrative order. A consent order indicates that the DNR has voluntarily entered into a legally enforceable agreement with the other party.

- The City of Cambridge has agreed to a consent order regarding its public water supply. The City was ordered to submit plans and specifications for additional distribution system storage or source capacity with emergency power, and to construct additional distribution system storage or source capacity with emergency power.

- Mark's Sanitation and Recycling, Inc., of Washington, has agreed to a consent order regarding open burning at the Washington County Recycling Center. Mark's Sanitation and Recycling was ordered to cease open burning, and to pay a \$200 penalty and a \$500 supplemental environmental project (SEP) to the Washington County Conservation Board.
- Frank Robak, of Little Sioux, has agreed to a consent order regarding underground storage tanks (UST). Roback was ordered to complete the permanent closure of USTs and to pay \$780 in delinquent fees.
- Bill Grieder, d.b.a. Grieder Oil Company, of Belle Plaine, has agreed to a consent order regarding underground storage tanks (UST). Grieder was ordered to submit a copy of a contract with an Iowa certified groundwater professional, submit a corrective action design report (CADR) or reclassification site monitoring report, and implement an approved CADR or undertake other corrective action.
- Moreland Development Co., LC; and Frank Moreland, of Iowa City, have agreed to a consent order regarding underground storage tanks (UST). Moreland was ordered to submit a copy of a contract with an Iowa certified groundwater professional, submit a corrective action design report (CADR) or reclassification site monitoring report, and implement an approved CADR or undertake other corrective action.
- Tom Sexton and Delcar, Inc., of Mapleton, have agreed to a consent order regarding underground storage tanks (UST). Sexton and Delcar, Inc. were ordered to submit a copy of a contract with an Iowa certified groundwater professional, submit a corrective action design report (CADR), and implement an approved CADR.
- Pellett Chemical Co., Inc., of Wiota, has agreed to a consent order regarding underground storage tanks (UST). Pellett was ordered to submit a copy of a contract with an Iowa certified groundwater professional, to submit a Tier 1 site assessment report and possibly a Tier 2 site assessment report.
- Midway Oil Company, of Burlington, has agreed to a consent order regarding underground storage tanks (UST). Midway was ordered to submit a notice of tank closure, complete tank removal and submit a tank closure report. In a separate consent order, Midway agreed to submit a copy of a contract with an Iowa certified groundwater professional, submit a corrective action design report (CADR), and implement an approved CADR.
- Jim Christensen Feedlot, of Royal, has agreed to a consent order regarding a 2001 fish kill on Willow Creek in Clay County. Christensen was ordered to comply with minimum manure control requirements and water quality standards, to comply with DNR directives under the Iowa Plan for Open Feedlots, to pay a \$2,947.02 penalty and to pay restitution of \$1,052.98 to the Fish and Wildlife Trust Fund. The penalty has been paid.

For more information, contact Jessie Rolph at (515) 281-5131 or Jessie.Rolph@dnr.state.ia.us.